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ABSTRACT

New statistics showing the need for improving the quality of the U.S. work force shift the focus of government-sponsored employment and training programs from social justice to economic security for all. At the same time, statistics show that more than 50 percent of young black males, even those who have a high school education, cannot find jobs. Hispanic youth in cities have similar or higher unemployment rates. However, with the present budget deficit, the Federal Government cannot solve this problem. The next round of federal legislation to aid education for disadvantaged youth should start with the concept of community responsibility and establish a tracking system to give each community information on how its youth are doing. New federal legislative initiatives must leverage local private sector employment, public education, and community organization resources and build systems of accountability for measurable results into the program design. The existence of Private Industry Councils to represent the interests of local businesses as partners with education and training institutions and the growth of such programs as the Boston Compact indicate that the elements of a more effective youth policy can be designed with the government as catalyst rather than as funder. (KC)

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WORKING PAPER

From "Solution" to Catalyst: A New Role for Federal Education and Training Dollars

William J. Spring

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Introduction

A new administration in Washington raises hope that effective solutions to neglected problems can be found. Since the late 1950's, when James Conant found "social dynamite" in the streets of Detroit where half the young men were out of school and out of work, a bewildering variety of federal programs has been developed to respond to the challenge of youth unemployment. However, conditions today are worse than ever.

The re-authorization of Vocational Education legislation in 1989 requires that Congress and the Administration determine future direction. The Carter Administration began its efforts -- in hastily organized collaboration with the Congress -- by passing the Youth Employment and Demonstration Programs Act (YEDPA) in the summer of 1977. It ended those efforts by proposing a dramatic collaboration between the Department of Labor and Department of Education programs in the Youth Act of 1980.

Unsatisfactory past experiences and the size of the federal deficit have convinced most people that the federal government cannot "solve" this crisis. Substituting gesture for serious policy, which the current level of federal spending now provides, is even more unsatisfactory. The vast bulk of education and training dollars are spent by local and state governments as well as the private sector. For this year, at least, the question then becomes whether Federal programs can be designed as an effective catalyst to encourage coordinated use of local, state and private resources to document the problem, set realistic goals and get about the business of making measurable progress.

In the 1980's major developments have changed dramatically the terms of debate. International competition, accelerating technological change and a potential shortage of workers are focusing new attention on the gaps in the education and training of the American workforce. No longer is the issue seen largely in terms of economic justice and social equity. The dream of future economic security for all, and even maintaining the current status, depends upon substantial improvements in the quality of our workforce. The current round of discussions on education reform focuses on the organization of education at the classroom and school building level. Professional working conditions and professional levels of accountability for teachers are required as we face failure of American education to provide quality instruction for the majority of our young people.

The Crises of City Learning and Earning

The statistics are bleakly familiar:

- Dropout rates, standing at 25 percent for the nation, are closer to 50 percent for young Blacks in many cities and even higher for Hispanics.
- The earnings of Black males ages 20 to 24 have declined by 46 percent from 1973 to 1986. For Black male high school dropouts, earnings have declined 60.6 percent. This is a drop from the poverty level for supporting a three-member family to far below, according to the work of Professor Andrew Sum

of Northwestern University.[1]

- Whereas a substantial majority of Black males earned enough in 1973 to support a three-member family, now only a small minority does. Why is the proportion of babies born out of wedlock rising while the fertility rates of young Black women fall? Why have marriage rates fallen so far? Perhaps the lack of earning power on the part of young Black males is a factor.

- For Blacks who stay the course to graduate from high school, only 28 in 100 are able to find work by the following October (according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics study of the class of 1985) compared to 52 of every 100 Whites.[2]

The major challenge to public schools is educating poor children. American education statistics are seldom presented on the basis of parental income despite the fact that such data on income class is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, predictor of educational success. Americans looking at English education statistics are astonished to find that information is routinely available on test scores by income status of parents (laborer, operative, manager, technician, professional). Our failure to follow the relationship between economic status and educational achievement confuses our understanding considerably. Since we do have data by race, and because such a large proportion of Blacks and other minorities are poor, we tend to exaggerate the extent to which our educational difficulties are racial, rather than economic in origin. Note for instance, that the Education Commission of the States' report on *Disconnected Youth* points out that most young people in educational and employment trouble are White (of the 2.375 million "disconnected" 16-to-19-year-olds, 1.2 million are White, 750,000 are Black and 375,000 are Hispanic).[3] Yet, the troubles of inner-city schools are associated with race.

The isolation of inner-city young people -- Black, White and Hispanic -- from the mainstream labor markets compounds the difficulty. Markets require supply and demand, but they do not operate automatically; markets require information. A "perfect" market in economic terms is one in which buyers and sellers have perfect information on price and quality. For middle-class young adults, parents are the best job developers. Parents have, or can gain access to, networks of information about the job market. But poor parents cannot fulfill that role. This lack of networks is compounded by negative stereotypes. Employers are reluctant to hire inner-city young people, especially young males. And young people hold reciprocal negative stereotypes about employers. For all youth, the transition from school to life as a self-supporting member of the workforce is gradual and difficult. For inner-city young people, where the environment is often openly hostile to straight employment, it is that much more difficult. And that situation is reflected in unemployment and labor force participation numbers.

The current international economic position of the United States and the demographics of its

1. Andrew Sum, Northeastern University, as reported in the William T. Grant Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship's *The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families*. 1988. The Grant Foundation, Washington, D.C, Table 6, p. 27.

2. William J. Spring. 1987. "Youth Employment and the Transition from School to Work". *New England Economic Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, March-April, Table 4, p. 6.

3. Education Commission of the States. 1986. *Disconnected Youth*.

labor force as the 21st century approaches present a very real challenge: young people must come much closer to realizing their full human potential. However, the nation's failure to educate not only the children of poverty, but to help those who choose not to pursue college to realize their potential, raises questions about our ability to meet this challenge.

Toward a Broader Framework

The K-12 public school system is an expression of the nation's and individual communities' commitment to provide universal education for young people. This is in sharp contrast to the commitment to the further education, employment and training of those youth who do not attend college.

Simply put, the nation needs a new commitment -- one which would ensure young people through age 24 additional education and training to prepare them for the workforce.

That would mean free access to continued educational opportunity designed to ensure mastery of the elements of a serious high school education. Such mastery is what businesses expect from new labor market entrants. Business' failure to find such competence is at the heart of their sharp criticism of public education. Today public schools discourage bright young people who happen, often because of economic and social background, to be less quick in mastering academic fundamentals. The existing "second-chance" system is very small in scale and divided among many subsystems of education providers.

How might second-chance education be organized in high schools, alternative settings and in co-operation with employers? What would be the federal role in such a system? Between $3,500 to $5,000 is spent annually on each young person in high school or college; but virtually nothing is spent on their brothers and sisters who "drop out." This is neither equitable nor sensible. An under-funded second-chance system serves neither young people nor a nation at risk.

Such a broadened commitment would also require a serious organized effort to assure the transition from school to work. It would recognize what young people learn on the job between 17 and 24 is as important as the classroom learning of those who attend college and technical institutes. This recognition is at the heart of the broad and deep commitment of German employers to the expensive and nearly universal German Dual Apprenticeship system. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has made a multi-billion pound commitment to provide two years of paid employment and continued education to all school-leavers, as those who do not go on immediately to higher education are termed in Great Britain.

It would require taking seriously the organization of opportunities for continued education and training after entry into employment for those not going on immediately to higher education.

It would be unwise, and, given the federal deficit, unthinkable, to build such a system using only federal resources. Rather, the federal role must be catalytic. This framework would require national and local leaders to clearly understand the numbers to be served, the cost per unit of learning and how success would be measured. These leaders must:

- Understand how vocational education, community colleges, Adult Basic Education, for -profit vocational schools and apprenticeship programs, as well as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs, fit together at the local labor market level. For only at the local level does co-operation between these systems have operational reality or value.

- Develop agreed upon measures of accountability for learning progress across these programs, so that it is possible to compare fairly the effectiveness of different education systems.

- Develop much better ways of tracking the labor market and learning experience of young people.

- Identify and develop new roles and responsibilities for the private sector as a partner in employing and instructing young people at the point of transition into the workforce. The Boston Compact and similar efforts in other cities are just beginning to think this challenge through and build the organizational capacity to meet it.

- Maintain accurate records to measure the experiences of young people in the labor-market.

It would require, in short, thinking through the informational, organizational and funding requirements for moving the concept of "lifelong learning" a step toward practical reality.

The Youth Act and the Boston Compact as Useful Models

The Youth Act of 1980, sent to Congress in March and approved overwhelmingly by the House in August, died in the Senate as election day approached. The proposed act broke new ground in federal legislation for education. It required individual high schools to compete for substantial sums of remedial money by developing plans with specific short- and long-range measurable goals for improved student academic performance. It also required -- and would have funded -- job experiences for at-risk young people through collaboration with local employment and training programs.

Unlike the usual pattern of federal aid and regulations, the Youth Act called for competition, group planning, accountability and integration of education with work experience at the school building level.

The Boston Compact was constructed using the Youth Act as a model. The basic principles of the legislation -- competition, accountability and combining work experience and opportunity with school improvement -- are key elements in the Compact. As part of the Compact, the mayor, business, university and union leadership together with the superintendent and a school committee have set measurable goals for educational improvements and are working together to ensure them. This collaboration has brought White and Black employment experience in school and for graduates close to parity.

The following chart compares the employment/population ratios (the number of employed young people compared to the entire population of graduates) for 1985 Black and White high school

graduates in Boston and the nation:[4]

	Black	White
National	28 %	52 %
Boston	60 %	62 %

Some 700 businesses provide summer job opportunities for students (over 3,000 in 1988) and/or jobs for graduates. Over $13 million has been contributed to an education fund including last dollar scholarship assistance for those accepted at college as well as a wide variety of educational assistance efforts.

Colleges and universities are providing counseling, scholarships and close tracking of high school graduates in college. Unions have pledged increased access to apprenticeship programs. A joint commitment to progress has been made.

Organized support by the private sector for school improvement and the provision of summer, after-school and graduate employment was not anticipated in the Carter Youth Act. The Boston experience demonstrates, however, that youth labor markets can be organized from the demand side and the transition from school to work for the children of low income families made much easier. With a little imagination, work in entry-level retail-food establishments, now seen as dead-end jobs, could be combined with continued education opportunities to build job ladders, reducing sharply the need for public service employment for youth. However, the lack of adequate funds for remedial education at the high school level has been a major problem in Boston.

The Institutional Tangle at the Local Level

In Lyndon Johnson's Washington, the scorecard was kept on the passage of legislation, not its implementation. The efforts of the elected official seemed about finished -- or at least exhausted -- when the long drawn-out battle from concept to proposal through legislation and appropriation was completed. However, for the child, teacher and parent, implementation is at least as important. From the federal government's perspective -- looking through the prism of departments, subcommittees and interest group organizations -- the world consists of a series of loosely related systems with legislative reality requiring each be dealt with separately. At the local level, where services are delivered, the systems and subsystems converge uneasily.

The situation at the local level concerning schooling, transition to work, second-chance education and on-the-job training reflects the following:

- K-12 public education, a $130 billion enterprise, has failed to provide quality education for at least half of our young people. The education system is proud of the work it does preparing the brightest for college and graduate school. In

4. William J. Spring. 1987. "Youth Employment and the Transition from School to Work." *New England Economic Review*. Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, March-April, Table 4, p.. 6.

response to *A Nation At Risk*, pressure to do better by middle-class and academically adept children is strong. But the system does not assume effective responsibility for those with significant educational deficits, and it plays only a marginal role in the transition from school to work.

- Vocational education, concerned with both broad educational responsibilities and occupational training (but not carefully measuring separate results) is isolated from most employers. It is of measurable help only to a few young people who take a significant number of courses in specific occupational specialties. The vocational system operates through the strict regulations of a self-sealing bureaucratic structure famous for its unwillingness to integrate its efforts with those of parallel systems.

- The existing "second-chance" education and training systems (adult basic education and the programs of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)) are tiny, compared to the need and reach less than 5 percent of those eligible). The interventions provided are so short in duration as to make serious progress on basic reading gaps impossible for students with serious deficits. However, the JTPA system does have three useful elements:

  1. The Private Industry Councils (PIC's), established in federal law in the 1978 Carter CETA amendments and made co-equal with local elected officials in the 1982 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), provide a forum where private sector leaders can be made aware of the severity of local problems. They can also provide oversight and influence the development of a second-chance system.

  2. Community-based organizations and other "alternative" education and training agencies, products of the effort to focus attention and resources on the citizens of low-income neighborhoods in the 1960's, provide a "delivery system" of extraordinary responsiveness and flexibility, especially when coupled with performance contracting.

  3. Performance contracting is designed to pressure the system to find job placements after relatively inexpensive and short periods of training. This has the unintended effect of excluding those in need of serious basic skills remediation from the system. But it has made progress toward holding individual service delivery units responsible for measurable accomplishments.

- The Job Service is largely ineffective in many states. Draconian cuts in dollars and staff and great pressures to help people get off welfare has left it a stigmatized agency. Still its basic functions of labor market information, counseling about jobs and training and operating an effective labor market exchange are necessary. In many cities the Job Service still plays a role in the transition from school to work (it operates in some 40 of New York City's 123 high schools). But it is not the responsible agency for helping young people make the transition to work that the British Careers Service is.

- Community colleges are the great institutional innovation of the last 30 years. They have grown from serving a few hundred thousand to 10 million students since Harry Truman embraced the concept of a national network of two-year college-level public institutions. They have a record of educating young Americans, a few going on to four-year institutions, most toward additional occupational instruction. But like the land grant colleges that accepted virtually all high school graduates and cheerfully flunked out all but the talented and hard-working, they do not see themselves as responsible for the success of all students.

Elements of Promising Policy

The pattern in the past has been for Washington or a state capital to give resources to one of these subsystems with the hope that something positive, and preferably measurable, would result. But since none of the systems own the problem, none can be expected to be responsible for solving it. The result is a welter of efforts with resource allocations being made on the grounds of political relationships rather than documented effectiveness.

Much of the the recent discussion of education reform has focused almost exclusively on the K-12 system. This makes sense as the public education system, at least in principle, is responsible for educating our youth. However, if the dilemmas posed by the nation's demographic, technological and competitiveness challenges are to be met, solutions that focus upon the isolated traditional classroom are not sufficient. The schools have shown too little imagination in reaching out to the harder-to-teach, and are poorly positioned to be responsible for the school-to-work transition or for the organization of second-chance education. And perhaps most important, federal, state and local big city school bureaucratic structures appear too rule bound and too committed to top-down hierarchical management to provide strong support for a school system comprised of self-managing buildings.

High Schools that are Academically Effective for Young People from Low-Income Homes

There seems to be a remarkable degree of consensus among experts about the essential elements of effective schools. However, there appears to be a scarcity of urban systems where these principles are applied. Any new round of federal education and training legislation must address this anomaly and use scarce national resources to promote effective change at the classroom level.

James Comer of Yale states the consensus as clearly as anyone. Children, in his view, are born with strong aggressions and a strong need to be loved. For the love of trusted parents aggression is channeled into productive uses. In teaching, gaining the trust of the students comes first; then aggressive energy can be channeled into learning. A noted political philosopher once warned that "you can do anything with a bayonets except sit on it." Nowhere are the limits of coercion -- physical or psychic -- clearer than in the classroom. Comer says trust cannot be established unless the teachers themselves trust one another and school leadership. Building effective schools starts not with the curriculum testing and "high standards", but with the construction of a community of trust and educational purpose. Comer's success in the New Haven elementary schools is evidence this concept works. Another indication comes from the survey of effective high schools reported by John Chubb in his article, "Why The Current Wave of School Reform Will Fail," in the Winter 1988 issue of *The Public Interest*. In a survey of high schools, Chubb finds the key variable that distinguishes effective from less effective schools is not the usual suspects -- homework, emphasis on writing, effective discipline or strict graduation requirements -- but rather the "organization" of the school.[5]

High performing schools, Chubb found, were characterized by academic excellence and

5. John Chubb. 1988. "Why the Current Wave of School Reform Will Fail." *The Public Interest*.

democratic methods of team building. Teachers in a well-organized school were more likely to say "the school seems like a big family." Chubb learned that four years spent at a well-organized school is worth a full additional year's academic achievement to the average student compared to an ineffectively organized school. Such schools, of course, need administrative autonomy. The pessimistic title of Chubb's article reflects his view that the autonomous school and the big city school bureaucracy are natural enemies. He notes "... the more extensive the administrative system of which the school is a part, the more likely external control, whatever its motivation, will be imposed or tightened."[6]

The Transition from School to Work

The depressing unemployment statistics for Black high school graduates demonstrate that the transition from school-to-work for non-college bound poor people is very difficult. In England, recognition of this fact led to the establishment of the Careers Service early in the century with responsibility for counseling and job placement. Under the Thatcher government a Youth Training Scheme guarantees two years of employment and training for each school leaver. In Germany, the transition from school to work is organized through the Dual Apprenticeship system.

Fully 50 percent of each age cohort spends two or three years in an apprenticeship, mastering a skill and earning wages on the job while attending a vocational school to gain a certificate of mastery in one of 400 skill areas. In Boston some 1,000 graduates (in a class of just under 3,000) found full-time jobs paying $6.00 per hour through the Boston Compact. Nearly a score of American cities, and the state of California, are now developing their own versions of the Compact. While jobs alone cannot overcome serious education difficulties (the dropout rate in Boston still remains at about 40 percent), organized access to jobs is essential to a reformed education and training system.

Opportunities for Second-Chance Education and Further Training after the Beginning of Working Life

If the secondary school in urban America is a troubled institution, at least it has a definable role. Young people who go on to college move from one academic institution to another, with considerable help from government (between $4,000 and $9,000 per student year annually depending on how the figure is calculated). But for the majority who go directly into full-time work, there is little encouragement for making the dream of "life-long learning" a reality. Often the one lesson effectively taught them in school is that they are dumb. Frequently they have limited reading skills. The small (often retail) firms where they find entry-level jobs have little or no capacity for training. There is no U.S. equivalent of the training components of Britain's Youth Training Service or the German Dual system, although the list of agencies providing some degree of potential assistance is long.

6. John Chubb. 1988. "Why the Current Wave of School Reform Will Fail." *The Public Interest*, p. 42.

We lack reliable data on the post-high school experience of young Americans. There is no single definition of what a dropout is as reported to state and federal governments. We do not even have data on the raw size of the post-secondary training system based on dollars spent, number of employees, students and results of placement and wages. Except for a 1985 Bureau of Labor Statistics study little is known about the transition from school to work. The same is true about education after high school (dropouts, skills mastered, program completion and jobs found) and training on the job. It is not known, for instance, how many people were trained with public money in any one occupation statewide, or within a labor market area. To effectively manage -- as opposed to judge -- a system, all training institutions would have to agree on what comprises the most accurate and fair data.

Federal Programs

The Traditional Model for Federal Support for Education

For the weary veterans of the long battle to secure federal support for elementary and secondary education, 1965 was a banner year. In the fall of 1964 Senator Wayne Morris of Oregon, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, introduced legislation to extend the practice of providing federal support to school districts "impacted" by the children from non-property tax paying military installations and to districts with large numbers of low-income children. Federal responsibility for poverty had, at least to some extent, long been acknowledged in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and reaffirmed by the Economic Opportunity Act. The Johnson landslide in 1964 brought with it a Congress overwhelmingly supportive of new Federal initiatives. Still, those advocating federal aid to education so feared a collapse in their coalition that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed with the Senate exactly as approved by the House, thus avoiding a Senate-House conference on the legislation. Supporters had good reason to worry. Tensions over states rights and the aid to students in parochial schools had twice killed legislation that had passed one or another house of Congress. Not only was Title I passed and funded, but Charles Lee, who had helped Morris draft the original legislation, led the Coalition for Full Funding for Education to victory on the House floor defeating Appropriations Committee efforts to limit spending under the program.

A requirement for these landmark successes, however, was unity. And a requirement for achieving this unity was an agreement that no part of the education coalition seriously criticize another or, indeed, the record of American education. From the National Association of State Boards of Education to the National Association of Educational Equipment Manufacturers, education was apple pie. The only thing lacking was federal funds to make the pie bigger.

The traditional model of federal support for education has been to provide dollars to states, which in turn pass them on to school districts that allocate them to individual schools. Great efforts have been made to assure this support reached the youngsters for whom it was intended. In the Title I (now Chapter I) programs for disadvantaged children, this resulted in definably separate educational programs regardless of the educational merit of such separate treatment. The Education of the Handicapped Act resulted in mandated requirements for educational services. Much of the Congressional debate over educational funding has been over how much should be

spent on any one target group and through which delivery system. Whatever other virtues this process may have, it was not designed to improve educational quality through increased autonomy of the individual school building.

If autonomy is important for effective education, accountability is essential to assure that money is wisely used. Because past education legislation was designed to spend money on designated target groups, accounting practices designed to ensure this have been taken to considerable length. No parallel structure of accountability for overall educational effectiveness, however, has been attempted at the national level.

The Evolution of Employment and Training Legislation

The employment and training system story is somewhat different. By the time President Richard Nixon assumed office in 1969, the employment and training system was funded by some $1.5 billion a year, mostly divided between the Department of Labor and the Office of Economic Opportunity. The administration sought, in the proposed Manpower Training Act of 1969, to turn these programs over to the states based on the Job Service model. The Democratically controlled Congress balked at what was seen as a move to disenfranchise community-based organizations and local governments. So the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 instead established a "prime sponsor" system in which cities or counties or groups of local jurisdictions with a reasonable population size could design their own programs. Coalitions of cities and community-based organizations were able to control not only training funds, but also federal funds for public service employment programs.

The legislation also required performance documentation for each individual served. By the time the Job Training Partnership Act was passed in 1982, payment to federally-funded training programs depended in great part on the performance of service providers in securing employment for program graduates. The system absorbed draconian cuts in funding (a 37 percent reduction in real terms in training dollars and the elimination of public service employment and stipends for those without other sources of income). With overall funds so very tight, many small agencies were driven out of business. An agency's poor performance on retention, placement and cost per trainee placed often meant extinction.

In 1978 -- at the high water mark for public service employment (some 750,000 PSE jobs) -- the Carter Administration sought a 25 percent increase in funds for training and the establishment of Private Industry Councils (PIC's). Over half of PIC members were from private industry with representation from city and state agencies, including the schools, unions and community-based organizations. A PIC could decide jointly with the mayor how additional training funds were to be spent. It was hoped that such a council would provide more effective access to private sector jobs and support from private sector leaders. In the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 the PIC approach to joint decision-making was adopted as the pattern for entire Department of Labor-funded training systems for the disadvantaged.

Title II of the Youth Act of 1980

The Youth Act was the result of an unusual collaboration between the Departments of Labor and Education, and between their supporters in Washington and subcommittee staffs on the Hill. The Youth Act grew out of experiences with the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977. Under the leadership of Vice President Walter Mondale, the Administration established a Task Force on Youth Employment in the fall of 1978 to determine future directions. The Task Force held roundtable hearings in six cities to learn about the experiences and recommendations of local business, union, community, school and employment and training leaders.[7] A number of lessons were apparent:

- The problem of youth unemployment had its roots in lack of basic academic skills.
- In the past it had been understood that young people needed hope for economic advancement -- a credible shot at a decent job -- if they were to be motivated in school or training programs. We now understand how hard it is to provide that credibility through public sector jobs.
- Work experience without mastery of basic skills provided only temporary help.

Any long range hope for solving the problem lays in improved school-based education for the children of poverty, and not in expanded federally-funded alternative education for dropouts. A way had to be found to devote a larger share of the current state and local education funds to those in educational trouble.

David Mundell, then working for the Congressional Budget Office, pointed out that few Title I federal dollars were being spent at the secondary level. Studies by the RAND Corporation and others revealed that only those projects which teachers designed persisted after federal funds ran out. The principles for the drafting of a new Youth Act emerged.

In the fall of 1979, with the carrot of $2 billion in added funding despite the very tight budget year, the White House was able to develop an agreement among the Department of Labor, Department of Education, the President's Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the elements of the Youth Act.

The Youth Act Provisions

The Youth Act proposed substantial funding for remediation at the high school level -- an additional 30 percent of the state average per pupil expenditure -- through the state and local education agencies to individual high schools. Eligibility was based on serving a large number of low-income young people, but yet each school would have to compete for funding. Teachers and a parents council would have a major role in program planning. The plan would have to specify short- and long-term goals for basic skill improvement, reduced drop-out rates, improved

7. James P. Comer, M.D., M.P.H. 1988. "Effective Schools": Why They Rarely Exist for At-Risk Elementary Schools and Adolescent Students." *School Success For Students At Risk Analysis and Recommendations of the Council of Chief State School Officers*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publisher, p. 77.

attendance, development of employment skills, improved transition from school to work and elimination of race and sex stereotyping.

Criteria for measuring progress would also be established, as would plans for staff development, outreach to parents and collaboration with the private sector. Upon graduation each student was to be provided with documentation of basic and employment skills on mastery of required competencies identified by the private sector. Support services, including day care, were to have been part of the plan.

The legislation, as reported from Committee to the House floor, required that 22 percent of Title II dollars be used for the development of joint programs to assure employment and training opportunities as part of the school plan.

Both school and district would have been required to establish representative advisory councils. The district-wide council -- which could have been an augmented PIC -- would have a role in recommending which schools be considered for funding. Funding to individual schools would include an initial three-year commitment, "so long as the local educational agency determined that the school is making substantial, documented progress toward meeting short- and long-term goals."

The Administration requested $1 billion for Title II and $1.8 billion for the Department of Labor's extension and revision of its programs for out-of-school youth.

The Youth Act included several concepts new to education legislation at the time it was proposed, including:

- Competition between high schools for federal resources;
- Teacher-designed programs;
- Using actual student progress as the key measure of progress in a three-year effort; and
- A building-by-building collaboration between schools and the city's training system.

The experiences from the Boston Compact raise some new issues which any future legislation would have to address:

- Private sector organization of job opportunities is feasible for those who are able or willing to make a commitment to stay in school. The overwhelming majority (over 85 percent) of inner-city high school students turn out to be able workers when given summer- and part-time school year private sector work experience. With job placement assistance, they are able to perform satisfactorily in mainstream jobs upon graduation. Any new legislation should require a major commitment of resources from the private sector to the organization of job opportunities of young people participating in the program.
- Local resources for education will, for the foreseeable future, so outweigh federal contributions that one major purpose of federal programs should be to

leverage local resources. Any new legislation should require a substantial match of local resources at the school level devoted to the education of disadvantaged high school students.

- The Career Service is the reason for the success of the Boston Compact jobs effort. A job coaching staff, stationed in the schools but responsive to the private sector (in Boston career specialists are on the PIC payroll) should be a major part of any program.

- The measurement of youth's progress in school is a very difficult issue. Tests can be abused, for instance, if teachers simply teach answers to expected questions rather than attempt broader educational goals. But the danger that tests may be the enemy of the best in education should not deflect the drive for teacher accountability. Accountability is the flip side of the coin of professional recognition and staffing structures.

- Community-based organizations and alternative schools are major providers of second-chance education and need to be part of the local programs. Providing social services and neighborhood-based outreach to dropouts and potential dropouts is critical.

- The lack of information on the performance of the many agencies providing post-secondary training prohibits policymakers, students and the private sector from accurately evaluating the effectiveness of these programs. An accurate information base tracking public dollars and documenting results in the labor market is essential.

Federal Legislation as Catalyst

Future federal dollars might be made available on a matching basis to communities willing to build collaboratives, measure the problem, track all young people and set clear goals for accomplishments in learning, earning and skill development.

If city-wide programs are too large, federal resources should be directed to cities that will establish a comprehensive program in one or more of their poorest high school districts or neighborhoods. The program elements might:

- Provide in-school instruction in basic learning for at-risk youth designed by teachers at the school level based on the Youth Act model;

- Assure accountability at the school-building level;

- Allow dropouts to take all, or a share of public per pupil expenditure with them if they attend an approved alternative school;

- Provide support services to young people and their families through community-based organizations and community health providers;

- Include a private sector willingness to restructure the youth labor market with federal assistance funding a Careers Service;

- Develop an information system to track young people who have left high school, graduates and those in post-graduate training programs to provide the community information about the status of its young adults;

- Measure performance of the job-matching system and track graduates for two to four years after graduation;
- Provide information on local training opportunities as well as incentives to develop performance measurements on quality of education and placements;
- Modify JTPA youth authorization to maximize education investments and de-emphasize job placement for young people with basic skills deficiencies. Unskilled entry-level jobs could be combined with continued basic skills instruction; and
- Integrate the Job Training Partnership Act and vocational education with local industries for high school juniors and seniors and for graduates, so a substantial part of the instruction is on-the-job.

Conclusion

The next round of federal legislation to aid education for disadvantaged youth should start with the concept of community responsibility, and establish a tracking system to provide each community information on how its youth are doing. However, the federal budget deficit precludes drawing the needed new resources from the national budget alone. Better use of existing dollars is essential. New federal legislative initiatives must leverage local private sector employment, public education and community organization resources and build systems of accountability for measurable results into the program design. The nation's economic stake in quality education access to employment and further training for inner-city children is widely recognized. There is a broad agreement on the elements necessary for an effective system of schools. The existence of a system of Private Industry Councils to represent the interests of local business as partners with education and training institutions, and the growth of programs like the Boston Compact indicate that the elements of a more effective youth policy can be pulled together.

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